

T H E

Prophecy of Queen *Emma* ;

AN ANCIENT BALLAD.

[Price One Shilling.]

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THE
PROPHECY
OF
QUEEN *EMMA*;

An ANCIENT BALLAD lately discovered;

WRITTEN BY

Johannes Turgotus,

Prior of *Durham*, in the Reign of *William Rufus*.

To which is added, by the EDITOR,

An ACCOUNT of the DISCOVERY, and HINTS
towards a Vindication of the AUTHENTICITY
of the Poems of *Ossian* and *Rowley*.

LONDON:

Printed for J. BEW, Pater-Noster-Row;

MDCCCLXXXII.

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(3)

THE
PROPHECY
OF
QUEEN EMMA.

O'ER the hills of Cheviot beaming
Rose the silver dawn of May;
Hostile spears and helmets gleaming
Swell'd along the mountains gray.

Edwin's warlike horn resounded
Through the winding dales below,
And the echoing hills rebounded
The defiance of the foe.

O'er

O'er the downs like torrents pouring
Edwin's horsemen rush'd along,
From the hills like tempests louring
Slowly march'd stern Edgar's throng.

Spear to spear was now portended,
And the yew bows half were drawn,
When the female scream ascended,
Shrilling o'er the crowded lawn.

While her virgins round her weeping
Waved aloft their snowy hands,
From the wood Queen Emma shrieking
Ran between the dreadful bands.

Oh, my Sons, what rage infernal
Bids you grasp th'unhallow'd spear!
Heaven detests the war fraternal;
Oh, the impious strife forbear!

Ah,

Ah, how mild and sweetly tender
Flow'd your peaceful early days!
Each was then of each defender,
Each of each the pride and praise.

O my first-born Edwin, soften,
Nor invade thy brother's right;
O my Edgar, think how often
Edwin dar'd for thee the fight.

Edgar, shall thy impious fury
Dare thy guardian to the field!
Oh, my Sons, let peace allure ye;
Thy stern claims, O Edwin, yield.

Hah, what sight of horror waving,
Sullen Edgar, clouds thy rear!
Bring'st thou Denmark's banners braving?
Thy insulted brother's spear!

Ah,

Ah, bethink how through thy regions
 Midnight horror fearful howl'd,
 When, like wolves, the Danish legions
 Thro' thy trembling forests prow'd,

When, unable of resistance,
 Denmark's lance thy bosom gor'd—
 And shall Edwin's brave assistance
 Be repaid with Denmark's sword!

With that sword shalt thou assail him
 From whose point he set thee free,
 While his warlike sinews fail him,
 Weak with loss of blood for thee!

Oh, my Edwin, timely hearken,
 And thy stern resolves forbear!
 Shall revenge thy councils darken,
 Oh, my Edgar, drop the spear!

Wisdom

Wisdom tells and Justice offers
 How each wound may yet be balm'd :
 O revere these holy proffers ;
 Let the storms of hell be calm'd.

Oh, my Sons——But all her sorrows
 Fired their impious rage the more :
 From the bow-strings sprung the arrows ;
 Soon the valleys reekt with gore.

Shrieking wild, with horror shivering,
 Fled the Queen all stain'd with blood,
 In her purpled bosom quivering
 Deep a feather'd arrow stood.

Up the mountain she ascended
 Fierce as mounts the flame in air ;
 And her hands, to heaven extended,
 Scatter'd her uprooted hair :

B

Ah,

Ah, my Sons, how impious cover'd
With each other's blood, she cried :
While the eagles round her hover'd,
And wild scream for scream replied—

From that blood around you steaming
Turn, my Sons, your vengeful eyes ;
See what horrors o'er you streaming
Must'round round th'offended skies.

See what burning spears portended,
Couch'd by fire-eyed spectres glare,
Circling round you both, suspended
On the trembling threads of air !

O'er you both Heaven's lightning volleys,
Wither'd is your strength ev'n now ;
Idly weeping o'er your follies,
Soon your heads shall lowly bow.

Soon

Soon the Dane, the Scot, and Norman,
 O'er your dales shall havoc pour,
 Every hold and city storming,
 Every herd and field devour.

Ha, what signal new arising
 Thro' the dreadful group prevails!
 'Tis the hand of Justice poising
 High aloft th' eternal scales.

Loaded with thy base alliance,
 Rage and rancour all extreme,
 Faith and honour's foul defiance,
 Thine, O Edgar, kicks the beam!

Opening mild and blue, reversing
 O'er thy brother's wasted hills,
 See the murky clouds dispersing,
 And the fertile shower distils.

But o'er thy devoted valleys
 Blacker spreads the angry sky;
 Thro' the gloom pale lightning fallies,
 Distant thunders groan and die.

O'er thy proudest castles waving,
 Fed by hell and magic power,
 Denmark towers on high her raven,
 Hatch'd in Freedom's mortal hour.

"Curfed be the day detested,
 "Curfed be the fraud profound,
 "When on Denmark's spear we rested,"
 Thro' thy streets shall loud resound.

To thy brother sad imploring,
 Now I see thee turn thine eyes—
 Hah, in settled darkness louring,
 Now no more the visions rise!

But,

But thy ranc'rous soul descending
To thy sons from age to age,
Province then from province rending,
War on war shall bleed and rage.

This thy freedom proudly boasted,
Hapless Edgar, loud she cried——
With her wounds and woes exhausted,
Down on earth she sunk and died.

POST.

But thy rancorous soul descending
To thy sons from age to age,
Provinces risen from province rising,
War on war shall bleed and rage.

This thy freedom proudly boasted,
Hapless Edgar, loud the cry,
With her wounds and woes expanded,
Down on earth the flunk and die.

P O S T

POSTSCRIPT

BY THE

EDITOR.

THE Public has of late years been very highly gratified with the recovery of many long dormant, and unknown works of some of the greatest geniuses who have ever appeared in the poetical world ; and to the labours of the generous Editors of these invaluable works the true lovers of Genius owe every obligation. It is to the labours of such generous minds that we owe the recovery of the poems of Ossian, and the works of Rowley ; the first of which has been placed, by the greatest critics of the age,

on

on a level with Homer and Virgil, and the other as hardly second to Shakespear. And, certainly, the most invidious critic must confess, that, if merit is to be allowed to the superior unexhausted variety of Ossian, and to the unborrowing originality of Rowley, the scale must preponderate in the favour of these, the first-fruits of the poetical Resurrection,---a Resurrection which promises whole armies of the greatest geniuses who have ever been favoured by the smiles of Apollo and the Muses. All our Gallic and Welch recoveries have not, indeed, been equal to those of Ossian; but a person who makes a discovery of a long-lost poetical MS. ought never to suppress it on account of its inferiority: and every nation has its poets of different degrees, the lowest of which no true Antiquarian, or *Collector of Reliques*, would wish to be destroyed. Under these ideas the Editor of the foregoing very ancient Ballad presents it to the Public. It remains that he

should

should give an authentic account of the manner of its discovery.

He has the happiness of having been long acquainted with a very ingenious and learned Antiquarian, a native of the palatinate of Durham; a gentleman so very zealous in his researches for lost literature, and so stout a champion for those which of late years have been found, that he is at this moment on his travels through Lapland on purpose to discover proofs of the authenticity of the poems of his favourite Ossian. And his last letters assure his friends, that he is already not only possessed of the most convincing evidence in favour of his beloved tenet, but that he is informed a fair copy of Ossian's poems, in the handwriting of one of his own sons, is carefully preserved in the archives of the College of Bards* in Iceland; which MS. contains

* For an account of this College of Bards in Iceland, see Mallett's Northern Antiquities; and

not only several invaluable poems which have never been seen by Mr. Macpherson, but ascertains also the various dates, and places in a clear light the history of the age of Fingal; circumstances which the above learned gentleman has only, and to little purpose, groped after among the benighted bogs and precipices of the dark regions of conjecture. And we may now be assured, that, when these other poems of Ossian are published in English by our learned Traveller, the ignorant and misunderstood accounts which Dr. Johnson picked up in the Hebrides concerning the works of the Son of Fingal, will be for ever silenced.—But why this digression?—Have patience, good Reader, and the reason will appear immediately.

Though the most sagacious and learned class of critics are, at first glance, most pleasingly for a specimen of their poetry, see the beautiful Islandic ode in the Spectator, translated by Mr. Addison.

pleasingly convinced of the authenticity of poems and MSS. claiming an ancient date, yet there are a set of ignorant pedants who delight in cavilling at what they can never refute, and who bear a particular enmity to the restorers of long-lost poetry. He who knows the least of the tempers of these snarlers, must perceive that their first objection to the Antiquity of *Queen Emma's Prophecy* will be, that it is neither in the language or orthography of the reign of William Rufus, but that in both it is perfectly and entirely modern. But the futility of this reasoning will immediately appear from the following facts.

About three years ago, as the learned Gentleman, now on his travels as above mentioned, was searching for Antiquities in the cathedral of Durham, he observed a heap of old boards and other rubbish in a corner of the belfry; and next day, having procured leave from the bishop to remove

it, he brought two workmen with him, and in about two hours they came to an old chest of Norway oak at the bottom of the heap. Great was the joy at this discovery, but, alas! on opening it, it contained only a few hoods and surplices,—not one MS. which was the principal object of the search. Our friend, however, consoled himself much in the same way as the good woman did, who, on breaking her earthen pitcher, comforted herself with the thought that the bottom of it would serve her for a platter; so he recovered his spirits on thinking what a valuable present the hood and surplice would be to Sir Ashton Lever's Museum; to be placed beside the most curious of all Sir Ashton's Antiquities, also lately discovered in the palatinate, viz. part of a Roman Altar, whose inscription says it was erected by Agricola, A. D. 82. But here again was he disappointed; for the vestments, on being moved, fell into pieces like tinder. During the
night

night after this adventure, he could hardly sleep; but in the morning he dreamed of an old chest, which contained, in a double bottom, a great deal of ancient golden coin. Of this he took no notice for the present; but still old chests with false bottoms, and heaps of most curious coin, haunted his dreams; till, on the third morning, he resolved once more to examine the chest in the belfry. But cruel disappointment still followed him;—the chest, on cutting it up, had no false bottom at all. In the rage of this distress, he seized the carpenter's ax, and so violently struck the lid, using indeed some rash words, that he fairly split it in two. And now the treasure appeared!---a fair MS. in good preservation! And while our Antiquarian hugged it, and kissed it for joy, the carpenter wisely observed, there was no wonder it was found in a double lid, for that dreams were always contrary. But how was our friend's joy and veneration increased, when, on perusing his

his MS. he found it was no other than the *Prophecy of Queen Emma*, written by the famous Johannes Turgotus, Prior of Durham in the reign of William Rufus, a celebrated historian, and author, as the learned Mr. Bryant informs us, of a MS. on the Battle of Watchet with the Danes. This we may be sure is in verse; and this is another proof, according to our school, that Turgotus was author of *Queen Emma's Prophecy*.

The pseudo-critics, whom we have already described as haters of discovered poetry, will no doubt endeavour at least to pick holes in the above narrative; but we shall pay little attention to their cavils, their ignorance, and malevolence; but address ourselves more closely to those respectable and learned critics, who have defended the authenticity of the poems of Ossian and Rowley.

The

The last class of these gentlemen can never object to this mode of discovery ; and the above narrative is particularly circumstantial, and bears every mark of truth.

As to the modern orthography of the foregoing Ballad, nothing can be more easily accounted for. The fortunate Discoverer shewed the MS. in the genuine character and orthography of the reign of William Rufus to the Editor and many other friends ; but going rather on a sudden resolution on his journey to Lapland, he took it along with him, to compare it with the MSS. of that country and of Iceland : and it is on the entreaty of his friends, since his departure, that he sent the foregoing copy for publication, which he not only reduced to the modern orthography, but has also struck out several unintelligible words, which none but those who have dipt into some obsolete dictionary can understand ; urging these reasons
for

for so doing, that to print a modern poem in old spelling, no more makes it an old poem, than one's going to Westminster Abbey, and putting General Monk's cap on his head, would make him General Monk; and that, if an obsolete dictionary, which contained the same set of uncouth words which he had struck out, should happen to be found, it would afford a handle to doubt its authenticity, as nothing is easier than to stick any old word you please into a poem. The difficulty, indeed, is to make the whole appear as the piece of the same web, and not like the vestment mentioned in the Scripture, a patchwork of old and new cloth: or, to speak more plainly, nothing is easier than to string together all the hard words of king Alfred's days; but the difficulty is to avoid uniting them by idiom and phrases which were then unknown, and by forms of expression which long afterwards came first into use. And, certainly, our friend
argued

argued very judiciously in stripping his MS. of hard old words, and other appearances so easily assumed, and of such suspicious countenance when they chance to be detected.

And now if any critic should pretend to doubt the Antiquity of our Ballad, because idiom and forms of expression, unknown in the days of Rufus, may be twisted and tortured out of it, the learned defenders of Rowley must not be of the number. And even the learned Dr. Millne, and the ingenious Mr. Bryant, must own that our Ballad contains one intrinsic mark of Antiquity in a higher degree than the poems of Rowley: it does not contain one line, half line, scrape, or allusion from or to Mr. Pope, or any other of the modern poets.

We shall now consider the historical evidence of our Ballad's Antiquity; and

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these

these will be found much superior to every thing that has been adduced in favour of Rowley.

It is well known, that the Northumbrian kingdom extended at one time from the frith of Bodotria, now called Forth, to the river Humber, from whence all Antiquarians agree that it took its name, North-Humber-land. Of the three and twenty kings who reigned for 370 years in this division of the Heptarchy, History has given the actions of very few. And at what time the northern counties between the Forth and the Tweed were divided from the crown of Northumberland, and the means by which it happened, are utterly unknown. But this is known, that, in the time of the venerable Bede, that father of English History, who lived near Durham, and dedicates his History to his patron Cednulphe king of Northumbria, his patron's dominions were bounded on the north by the Tweed.

Now,

Now, what a valuable discovery would it be, if we could find a MS. which would throw light on this event? And this we actually have in the Ballad of Emma's Prophecy. History tells us there was such a dismemberment, and the Ballad, which is evidently founded upon it, tells us how it happened. The learned Maitland, who wrote the Histories of London and of Edinburgh, tells us, in the latter, that Edinburgh was founded by Edwin, a king of Northumberland, who, allured by the fertility of the Lothians, which were a part of his dominions, chused to erect a royal residence in the midst of those counties under the protection of the strong rock upon which Edinburgh Castle now stands. And while he was thus employed, he left the southern district of his kingdom under the guardianship of a kinsman. And now by the discovery of the Ballad, where we have Edwin by name, the History stands clearly thus: While Edwin was building Edinburgh,

his brother Edgar, his deputy in the South, was invaded, and his district cruelly overrun, by the Danes. Edwin marched to his relief, and totally expelled the invaders: and Edwin having returned to the building of his city, a few years prosperity made Edgar resolve to set up for himself, and refuse to send any more revenues to his brother; upon which bloody wars ensued between them. Edgar made an alliance* with the Danes, his old enemies; and a final dismemberment of the kingdom took place. But, while we admire how wonderfully History and the Ballad explain and support each other, we must not suppose

* It is remarkable, that this Ballad, which so warmly execrates the alliance of Edgar with his old enemies the Danes, should be found at the very time that the Americans made an alliance with their old enemies the French, which some may foolishly imagine was the sole object of the Ballad; but History affords many instances of such fortuitous combinations.

that

that Queen Emma rushed into a grand battle between her sons, where she was mortally wounded, and then ran bawling up a hill, and prophesied till she died. This is only the language in which Poetry delights to embellish the facts of History;—a grand, terrific fiction, somewhat of a kind with that of an old Scotch poet, where his hero, Sir William Wallace, having cut off an Englishman's head in a dark night, the Englishman takes it up, and throws it all bloody at Wallace, and Wallace takes it up again, and throws it at the bloody trunk, and thus both continue for an hour or two at this kind of tennis play;—a fiction which the reader will see cited, and justly and highly complimented, in that great clerk Mr. Thomas Warton's second volume of the History of English Poetry.

But even this terrific fiction in our Ballad contains historical evidence of its Antiquity,
and

and not only points out its real author, but the very year of its composition. All our old historians agree, that the northern counties of England suffered most severely from the ravages of the cruel Danes, and the inroads of the barbarous Scots; and when William the Conqueror marched northwards to subdue Malcolm king of Scots, that prince (who had married Margaret, Edgar Atheling's sister, the true heir of the crown of England) met him on the borders with so well-appointed an army, that William, to use the words of a venerable historian, was *fain* to make peace with him. But the tyrant, resenting the backwardness to join his army which the northern counties had shewn, and to which (to save his honour) he ascribed the failure of his expedition, laid all in blood and desolation from Solway to the Humber. And this is farther confirmed by his well-known Doomsday-Book, where more than one half of Yorkshire, and all the counties north

north of it, are represented as uninhabited. And the venerable Baker, in his Chronicle, (see reign of William I.) says, that, at this time, "between York and Durham, the
 "space of sixty miles, for nine years together, there was so utter desolation, as
 "that neither any house was left standing,
 "nor any ground tilled." And to this let it be added, that, in the year 1088, William Rufus seized the crown of England, in prejudice of his eldest brother Duke Robert. This produced a civil war, and many of the first nobility sided with the true heir. Our Ballad, as the MS. affirms, was written by Turgotus, who at this very period was prior of Durham, and was eye-witness of the above-mentioned desolations. These, and the contest of the royal brothers for the crown, could not fail to bring to his mind the contest between the Sons of Queen Emma, which was then fresh in every body's memory; and, as the good Prior was a zealous partizan

tizan of the true heir Duke Robert, so he was certainly desirous to write some popular strain in his favour. And, considering that the part of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria which remained to Edwin the elder brother's posterity, had been more fortunate than that of Edgar, which had from time to time been cruelly desolated by the Danes and the Scots, he thence takes occasion, in the Prophecy of Queen Emma, to pay court to his lawful prince, and to propagate a prediction against Rufus; a method excellently well adapted to the superstition of those ages, when a popular prophecy, in much worse rhymes than the foregoing Ballad, has often been known to overthrow whole armies and overturn thrones. And thus we have the certain date of our Ballad, viz. 1088, when Robert and Rufus were in the field in arms against each other. Or, if we suppose, which will do equally well, that the Ballad was written when the same Duke Robert

landed

landed at Portsmouth with a mighty army to claim his crown, which was now usurped by his brother Henry the First, we must place its date in the yea 1101. Or should we suppose, what indeed is most probable of all, that it was written during the actual bloody war which soon after broke out, and ended in Robert's captivity and having his eyes thrust out, we must then place its date, not in 1107, which was the year of Robert's misfortune, but in 1106, the year before; for it is evident, that the Ballad, which was meant to represent Robert's affairs as rather propitious, could not have been written after he was an eyeless captive. And here another ray of light breaks in upon us, and gives the reason why the MS. of this Ballad was so carefully concealed. Robert was finally unfortunate, and Prior Turgot was too well acquainted with the character of his own age to trust its generosity. In a much later reign, that of Richard III. a gentleman was
 E hanged,

hanged, drawn, and quartered, for this
filly rhyme,

The cat, the rat, and Lovel the dog,
Rule all England under a hog.

And what could the Prior have expected
from Henry, if his Ballad, which denounces
destruction on the usurpations of a younger
brother, had been found in his possession?
No wonder, therefore, that, willing to leave
it to after-ages, he should so carefully con-
ceal it, not by the stale trick of a double-
bottomed chest, but in the new and more
ingenious device of a double-lidded one.

And now, whatever those snarling cri-
tics, the haters of new-discovered poetry,
may say, the Editor assures himself, that
the abettors of the authenticity of Row-
ley's poems will be his strenuous friends;
for, however strong the historical evidence
in favour of their Antiquity may be, it falls
greatly short of the strength of inference,
historical

historical certainty, and fulness of evidence, contained in the above narrative.

A word or two now concerning our original MS. Fearful that so valuable a treasure should be lost, the Editor, in conjunction with several friends, has written to his friend in Lapland, earnestly begging that it may be transmitted to London, immediately on his having compared it with such Runic MSS. and others as may fall in his way; that it may be preserved in the British Museum, after having lain three months, for the inspection of the curious, at Mr. Bew's our publisher's shop. But the Public are hereby advertised, that the learned Gentleman now in Lapland is very testy in his disposition, and of all things cannot bear to have the Authenticity of his MS. called in question. And, having an illustrious example of mysterious conduct in respect to certain celebrated MSS. before his eyes, and being likewise strongly

attached to the possessor of the said MSS. who knows how far he may imitate the example of his learned and ingenious friend? It was certainly a pleasing thing for Jupiter to sit on the top of Olympus, and amuse himself for ten years together with the Trojan war, which at any time he might have finished with one thunderbolt. And it is certainly Jove-like and equally pleasing to look down from one's villa, on a literary contest as warmly disputed as the Trojan war, and for double the length of time, which the Jove-like looker-on might as instantly finish, by producing to proper judges the ancient MSS. of Ossian which were left three months for public perusal with Mr. Becket the bookseller. But no man is obliged to explain his motives to an impertinent Public; and it is to be feared, that, should the Public be impertinent to him, our friend, on his return from Lapland, may refuse to shew the MS. of his Ballad to proper judges, or to authen-

authenticate, by proper witnesses, where and by what means he acquired it. But the Editor pledges himself thus far to the Public, that, if he is enabled to put the MS. into Mr. Bew's hands, he undertakes to teach Mr. Bew the ancient character in a few days, by which he will be fully enabled to see, with his own eyes, that the printed copy is genuine. By this means, should our absent friend withdraw his MS. after the three months challenge, (a time rather short and ill adapted for people to come from John a Groat's house, or from Durham, to examine MSS. except they had nothing else to mind,)—should he withdraw it, we say, and lock it up in utter darkness, still Mr. Bew's evidence will authenticate its existence. And thus we shall escape the lamentable though laughable blunder which Mr. Becket fell into, when, on the publication of Johnson's Tour, he assured the Public, in an advertisement in the papers, that the MSS.

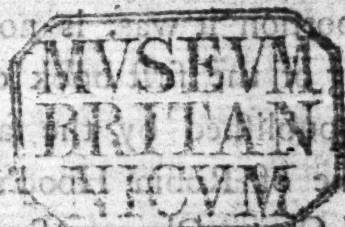
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of Ossian, in the original tongue, had been three months in his possession ;—whereas we all know that Mr. Thomas Becket knows not a word of Erse, and that therefore the MSS. left in his possession might have been a Highland genealogy, or an old parcel of Highland leaves, for any thing which he could know either pro or con. The lovers of old poetry newly discovered must, therefore, be pleased to note with what precaution we intend to avoid the like ridiculous situation.

But, as the Editor has hitherto acted with the utmost candour, he cannot conceal a certain circumstance, which has staggered even himself ; not, indeed, as to the Authenticity of the MS. for that he saw and was judge of ; but of a certain part of his Lapland friend's conduct. The case is this : He perfectly well remembers, that, when he first saw the MS. of Queen Emma, the first five or six stanzas were totally
different

different from those now published according to his friend's last copy. Now, what shall we say to this? Why, truly, it would be a hard matter to account for it, did not the case of Fingal help us out at this dead lift. True it is, that, about the year 1758, was published, by Hamilton and Balfour, at Edinburgh, a shilling octavo pamphlet, containing Mr. Macpherson's first specimens of his fragments of Erse poetry, the preface to which proposed his travelling in the Highlands, if enabled so to do, for the recovery of several others, particularly an epic poem named Fingal, the beginning of which was the concluding specimen of the pamphlet. But this opening, and a large portion it was, is no more like the opening of the first book of Fingal afterwards published by the same Translator, than one of Robin Hood's songs is like that of Chevy Chace. Several years ago the Editor mentioned this seemingly strange circumstance to a learned Scottish Antiquarian,

quarian, who very easily and satisfactorily accounted for it in this manner: "Among the various copies of Ossian, said he, which the learned Translator found in the Highlands, some were more perfect than others, and from the most perfect the complete edition has been given." Now, as the old proverb says, *what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander*; so this vindication is applicable to our Ballad: and our friend, having found more perfect copies of his MS. in Lapland than that found at Durham, in justice and due deference to the Public, has presented them with the foregoing, as not only the best, but the most genuine copy of the ancient Prophecy of Queen Emma.



FINIS